

WesternAncestor

Researching worldwide



Price \$10.00

Publication No. 100005240 ISSN 0159 4028

IN THIS ISSUE

- Tracing Your Seafaring Ancestors
- AGM 2026 Life member and society awards
- They Came By Ship project

FAMILYHISTORYWA

Fellow of the Library Board of Western Australia
Member of Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations Inc (AFFHO),
Family History Federation (UK).

Address 6/48 May Street, Bayswater, WA 6053
Email secretary@fhwa.org.au
Website www.fhwa.org.au
Facebook  www.facebook.com/discussion_group
www.facebook.com/FamilyHistoryWA
Telephone (08) 9271 4311 (Enquiries during opening hours)
International + 618 9271 4311
ABN 98 749 329 203

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President	Christine Harris	0419 090 105	president@fhwa.org.au
Vice President	Vacant		vp@fhwa.org.au
Secretary	Diane Thornton		secretary@fhwa.org.au
Treasurer	Neil Bradley	0491 769 224	treasurer@fhwa.org.au
Committee	Robert Atkins	0419 049 414	
Committee	Sue Goss		
Committee	Anne Giles		
Committee	Vacant		

FAMILYHISTORYWA CONTACTS

Activities	Ian Simon	0416 122 144	activities@fhwa.org.au
AFFHO Representative			affho.rep@fhwa.org.au
Archivist	Vacant		archivist@fhwa.org.au
Awards	Edwina Shooter	0424 221 633	awards@fhwa.org.au
Bookings Officer	Chris Harris	0419 090 105	bookings@fhwa.org.au
	Terri Usher		
Bookshop	Lyn Watt	0413 179 576	bookshop@fhwa.org.au
e-News	Anne Oliver		enews@fhwa.org.au
Ghost Towns Project			ghostswa.pm@fhwa.org.au
Information Technology	Chris Harris	0419 090 105	it@fhwa.org.au
Journals Officer	Lyn Watt	0413 179 576	
Legal Advisor	Bruce Havilah		
Liaison Officer	Ian Dew		liaison@fhwa.org.au
Librarian	Sue Goss		librarian@fhwa.org.au
	Sue Aldenton		
Library Rosters	Maureen Robbins		libraryrosters@fhwa.org.au
Membership	Vacant	08 9271 4311	membership@fhwa.org.au
Policy & Procedures	Robert Atkins	0419 049 414	policy@fhwa.org.au
Projects	Karen Lemnell	0413 179 576	projects@fhwa.org.au
Property	Vacant		property@fhwa.org.au
Promotions Coordinator	Anne Oliver		pr@fhwa.org.au
Publications Officer	Lyn Watt	0413 179 576	publications@fhwa.org.au
Research	Ian Barnes	0417 004 839	research@fhwa.org.au
SLWA Family History	Marilyn Dimond	0449 570 194	
Treasurer's Assistants	Julie Martin		finance@fhwa.org.au
	Janet Gunstone		accounts@fhwa.org.au
Volunteer Coordinator	Garry Keath	0417 996 678	volunteers@fhwa.org.au
WesternAncestor Editor	Editorial Committee		westernancestor@fhwa.org.au

RESEARCH CENTRE OPENING HOURS

Monday	9:30am - 7:00pm
Wednesday	9:30am - 2:00pm
Friday	9:30am - 2:00pm
Saturday	11:00am - 4:30pm

Closed on Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday & Public Holidays

Visitors are most welcome with a \$15 daily visitor pass, or a \$25 one calendar month visitor pass, allowing access to our Family History Research Centre, plus the cost of any printouts and/or photocopies. Reciprocal visits apply with some overseas, interstate & intrastate societies. Please show your current membership card.

INTEREST GROUP CONTACTS

CONVICT

convicts.sig@fhwa.org.au Jo Hyland

DNA

dna.sig@fhwa.org.au Christine Cavanagh 0408 937 267

ENROLLED PENSIONER GUARDS (EPG)

epg.sig@fhwa.org.au Teresa Handcock

EUROPEAN

european.sig@fhwa.org.au Ian Simon 0416 122 144

INDIA & SOUTH EAST ASIA

isea.sig@fhwa.org.au Liana Fitzpatrick 0414 412 035

IRISH

irish.sig@fhwa.org.au Ruth Barker

LEGACY USER GROUP

legacy.sig@fhwa.org.au Kaye Nind
Cathy Pinner

LONDON, SOUTH ENGLAND AND WALES

soe.sig@fhwa.org.au Peter Hamersley 0402 450 080

MILITARY

military.sig@fhwa.org.au Angela Heymans 0400 059 391

NORTH OF ENGLAND

noe.sig@fhwa.org.au Lyn Watt 0413 179 576

SCOTTISH

scottish.sig@fhwa.org.au Karen Tregenza 9341 4180

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

sa.sig@fhwa.org.au Ian Simon 0416 122 144

TECHNOLOGY

technology.sig@fhwa.org.au Carolyn Traynor 0407 470 099

THE MASTER GENEALOGIST

tmg.sig@fhwa.org.au Neil Bradley 0491 769 224
Robert Atkins

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN

wa.sig@fhwa.org.au Terri Usher

WRITERS

writers.sig@fhwa.org.au Marita McBride
Heather Simon

CONTENTS

Feature Articles

Tracing Your Seafaring Mariners <i>Unlocking the codes to the Port Rotation Numbers</i>	Peter Hamersley	87
They Came By Ship <i>A successful project—stories of pioneers to WA by ship</i>	Liana Fitzpatrick	92
Nicoletta Salustri	Carolyn Perriam	93
John Tyne	Joanne Hyland	94
Elijha and Ann Dawson	Angela Heymans	95
Amelia Sarah Wood	Teresa Handcock	96
A Letter Sent from the Ship <i>Aurora</i> 1840 <i>The trials of the voyage and hopes for the future</i>	Louise Clarkson	97
Rose <i>A journey out of Europe via Shanghai in 1948</i>	Carol Simmonds	104
Eating Pearl Ashes <i>A tiny heirloom reveals an unusual ingredient in family recipes</i>	Christine Fairhall	106
Fenwick, Scotland to Victoria, Australia: The Story of Robert Barr <i>Tragedy follows this family</i>	Carolyn Traynor	110
The Life of Adam Pearson Armstrong <i>Great hardship, but a story of perseverance and determination</i>	Ewin Armstrong	111

Society News and Information

The President's Report	86
From the <i>WesternAncestor</i> Editorial Committee	86
Society Awards 2026	99
Life Memberships 2026	100
New Librarians	103
Honouring 30 Years of Commitment and Community Spirit: Daphne Holgate	103
Celebrating the strength of FHWA's Special Interest Groups	113
Ten Years of the Military Interest Group	115

Useful Information about FHWA

About FHWA - corporate, official contacts	ii
Management Committee	ii
FHWA Contacts	ii
Research Centre Opening Hours	ii
Interest Group Contacts	ii
Affiliated Societies	iii
Institutional Members	iii
House Groups	iii
Membership and <i>WesternAncestor</i>	iii



FamilyHistoryWA and Copyright notice

FamilyHistoryWA cannot vouch for the accuracy of any offers of services, or goods, appearing in this journal, or be responsible for the outcome of any contract that may be entered into with an advertiser.

FamilyHistoryWA does not sponsor any professional genealogist, whether a member of FamilyHistoryWA or not; nor does FamilyHistoryWA derive any monetary benefit from such research.

Views expressed in articles in the *WesternAncestor* are those of the author(s) and in no way reflect the opinions of the editor, or FamilyHistoryWA. All material in this journal is copyright, and may not be reproduced, in any medium, without the permission of both the editor and the author(s).

© 2026 Western Australian Genealogical Society Inc operating as FamilyHistoryWA

JOURNAL PRODUCTION

Editor

WesternAncestor Editorial Committee
6/48 May St, Bayswater, WA, 6053.
westernancestor@fhwa.org.au

Desk Top Publishing & Design

Fluid Ink 0408 936 031

Printing

Advance Press 08 9376 4000
186 Railway Parade, Bassendean.

The President's Report

Christine Harris

I wrote in our last issue about the Society's need for volunteers. This time I would like to focus on a new initiative that has been put in place to support our volunteers in their roles.

Our group convenors are a very special part of the FHWA family. In total we have fifteen interest groups covering a diverse range of topics under the general umbrella of Family History. There are groups that are geographically based, and there are user groups, such as TMG (The Master Genealogist) and the Technology Group. There are specialist subject groups, such as DNA and Writers. All of these groups are run by volunteer committees headed up by a Convenor.

Working with the Convenors is the Society's Liaison Officer, a role that has recently been taken up by Ian Dew. As the former convenor of the Technology Group for many years Ian knows what it takes to be a Convenor.

Ian is convening face to face meetings at May Street, with a representative (ideally the Convenor) of each group attending. The three meetings held so far have identified two key goals: firstly to provide a support framework for volunteers, and secondly promotion of the groups to encourage greater attendance and participation. Methods to make our groups more visible and more accessible are being trialled and the results are reported back to the next meeting. Everyone is enjoying the community vibe of the meetings, so well done to Ian and to everyone involved. If you want to know more about our groups, check out Ian's article in this issue.

Note: this was prepared by Christine as a Vice President's Report prior to her leaving on holiday and is now amended as the President's Report after the AGM.



From the *WesternAncestor* Editorial Committee

Welcome to the second issue edited collectively by the Editorial Committee and supported by our proof-readers. This issue has a theme of ships, immigrants and voyages featuring the They Came by Ship project of 2025 which was so successful for FamilyHistoryWA. There is also an article which is a milestone for the *WesternAncestor*—Peter Hammersley's Tracing Mariners. For anyone who has not visited the website CLIP (the Crew List Index Project at <https://www.crewlist.org.uk/#top>), please take some time to do so. It is a must for the many researchers who have mariners in their family. And it's fascinating from an historical perspective. Peter explains (exclusively, for the first time in print) how he discovered keys to unlocking this hitherto confusing area, and how you can find the voyages of your own seafarers.

We also have a theme for our next journal, Vol 16 No 6: Technology. Now this is a rather broad subject, but it is a very pertinent one. There was a time—within living memory!—when the card index and reference books were our only guides. When the stamped, addressed envelope was totally necessary. And long-winded descendancy charts (very male dominated) ruled the roost. But we did have Excel spreadsheets, and early family tree programs, photo scanning and sorting software and Rootsweb. We don't need to tell you about the explosion in databases and AI of today—it's all too evident. But the need for community discussion, advice and support is just the same. We hope this next issue will provide a forum for you to consider the challenges and benefits of technology in family history research today.

Returning from a period when our journal missed some issues, we would like to re-vamp the look of the journal a little. Do you have ideas for a new layout? For themes issue by issue? Which brings this editorial note to another important question, one we hope you, our readers, will take seriously. What do you want to read in the *WesternAncestor*? What *don't* you want to see? Is there a barrier to you contributing? We would like to give you a journal that inspires your research and celebrates you, our readers and members.

Write to the *WesternAncestor* at westernancestor@fhwa.org.au, or post a letter, or slip a note in the *WesternAncestor* mailbox in Unit 4.

Ilove the thrill of the chase. Researching something new, breaking into fresh fields, and achieving some success – this is the buzz part of family history for me!

William spent his entire career at sea. He came from a large maritime family. His three brothers, plus his father-in-law and brother-in-law, and adopted son were also mariners. William was the first of my direct ancestors to be born and raised in the East End of London, just like me. I have a great affinity for him.

There is a wealth of information readily available for those of us researching British seafarers from the mid-19th Century. The most complete record for individual seafarers is the Register of Seamen's Tickets (1845-1854 inclusive). This is held at The National Archives UK (TNA) in Series BT113.¹ It consists of over 546,000 issued tickets, and I first consulted these records in person in the 1980s. Fortunately for current researchers, they are now indexed by name on both FindMyPast (FMP) and FamilySearch.

This register is a treasure trove for family historians. A typical record will show valuable information such as exact date and place of birth, plus a physical description including colour of hair and eyes, complete with height, literacy details and more.

BT113 also lists voyages in yearly columns—albeit in a numerical code. These numerical codes were given for each ship and were known as its Port Rotation Number (PRN). The PRN consists of two numbers, one for the ship, and one for its port of registry e.g., 434-93. The PRN reveals each ship's name and home port.

Example of Seafarers Record in BT 113

NAME AND DESCRIPTION		Age in	1845	1846
		Reported Voyages	Reported Voyages	
		Out	Home	Out
No. of	107/682 William Hawtinsley,	29	4	4
Born at	London	Age when Ticked	14-95	12-95
County of	Middx 18 day of Dec 1846	29		
Capacity	Steward			
Height	5 ft 4 in			
Complexion	Dark Eyes Hazel			
Marks		Can Write	Yes	
First went to Sea as	App ~~~ in the Year 1830			
Has served in the Royal Navy	4 years			
Has been in Foreign Service	~~~			
When unemployed, resides at	London			
Issued at	Newcastle 4 day of Jan 1845			

Fig 1. BT.113 extract for William Hamersley #107682

A transcription of this record follows:

Ticket #107682:			
Name	William Hamersley		
Born at	London		
In the county of	Middlesex	18 day of	Dec 1816
Capacity	Seaman		
Height	5 ft. 4 3/4	Hair	Dark
Complexion	Dark	Eyes	Hazel
Marks	~ (none)		
First went to Sea as	Apprentice	in the Year	1830
Has served in the Royal Navy	4 Years		
Has been in Foreign Service	~		
When unemployed resides at	London		
Issued at Newcastle	4 day of January 1845		
Age when ticketed	29		
Can write	Yes		

This information is invaluable for family historians. Further information is given in the yearly columns of Reported Voyages which has been extracted in Fig 2.

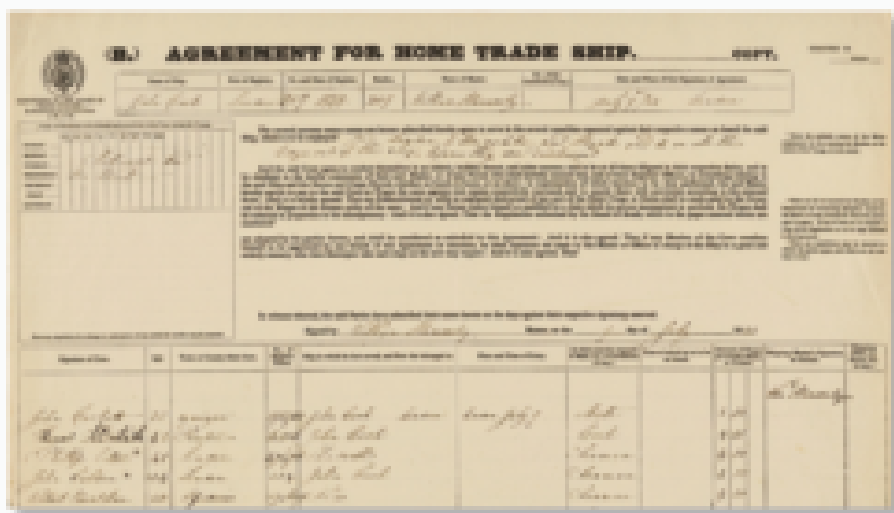
Fig. 2. Extract from Fig. 1: Newspaper for William Henry in 1844

Reading: Transcriptions, vol. 1, p. 21

The columns for "Reported Foreigner" are headed "Yes" and "No."

[illegible]

Seafaring Ancestors (Cont.)



Agreement for Home Trade Ship

these numbers has ever been found and some research guides described them as “unintelligible”.

These same codes were also used in the Register of Ships Masters, which can be found under Series BT 115 at TNA,² and also on FamilySearch and FMP.

William’s record gave me twelve such codes covering six years. His wider family gave me twenty codes to unlock. Twenty codes, relating to twenty unknown ships and ports to find, with no known way of finding the ship’s name.

Unlocking these codes and discovering the voyages and subsequent crew lists became my long-term goal. I bided my time for many years until things changed thanks to recent innovations.

FamilySearch finally made crew lists available on unindexed digital images sometime around 2020. Consisting of over 5,000 films, these were crew lists dated 1747-1860 from Series BT98 at TNA.³ In these records, ships were arranged alphabetically by port and year.

With BT98 now available, I saw

the opportunity to start researching these codes in an attempt to trace William’s career.

An Indexing Project Begins

In 2021, I decided to start my own index of PRNs using a spreadsheet. Most of my twenty codes were at large ports, which had multiple films to search through. I found it easier by initially searching smaller ports. I concentrated on the port of Stockton (Port#93) in 1846 (just two films), looking for ship number 434-93, searching films using FamilySearch in our resource centre at FHWA.

Interpreting the images was quite difficult at first. Many ships had the same name and made multiple voyages, which I found confusing. I created a simple index on a spreadsheet and soon began noticing patterns in the numbering system. After finding ship# 434-93 (the *Eston Nab*, of Stockton), I realised ships retained their PRN across the years. This was a significant breakthrough and was not known to me previously, nor had it been stated in various guides or books I had read.⁴ I also found PRNs were not issued on an alphabetical basis

(as had been suggested in some guides). I noticed older ships had lower PRNs. I wondered how the clerks at the shipping record office in London kept their original records. For example, did they use a master list or each year did they rewrite from scratch or simply amend?

Thinking outside the box, it became apparent to me that if ships kept the same PRN across the years, then an index of all UK ports for just one year would possibly include the majority of ships and would be a pretty useful research tool. I decided upon 1851 as a good year for such an index for two main reasons. Firstly, I had more codes to find for this year, and secondly, 1851 appeared to be more complete from seafarers’ records in BT 113. The fact that it is also a census year was a bonus and made it even more attractive.

I envisaged a search engine to accompany my 1851 index, wherein a researcher could enter a PRN (from BT 113 or BT 115, for example), and discover a ship’s name and port, thus enabling a quick search to locate the crew list. I thought this would be a massive help to other researchers and save many hours of laborious and sometimes futile searching. To illustrate: there are over 5,000 films in BT 98. Limiting the index to the year 1851 reduced the number of films required to build an index to just 443. This was a lot more doable—especially if a little help could be found.

Armed with my discoveries, I decided to approach the Crew List Index Project (CLIP), <https://www.crewlist.org.uk>, which I regarded as the leading online site for UK the nineteenth century shipping records and the foremost website for UK maritime research. I sent an email to Pete and Jan Owens at CLIP, and the rest, as they say, is history!

Seafaring Ancestors (Cont.)

Pete and Jan were very interested in my research, and we began sharing and studying the data. The addition of Pete and Jan's expertise quickly led to one discovery after another. In a short space of time, using data for the port of Whitby, we worked out how the initial PRN might have been allocated. This could not have been done without Pete and Jan's knowledge, experience, and intervention. We rediscovered the relationship between the PRN and a ship's port of registry number and year. As far as we knew, we were the first researchers in the modern era to know how to calculate a ship's Port Rotation Number! This was a massive breakthrough, and I am very proud to have been part of the small team of three that cracked the code.

Under the guidance of CLIP, things now moved at a much faster pace. We created a project to index films and set about letting the world know of our progress and managed to recruit some volunteers to help. We were enthused to receive additional help from Bruno Pappalardo, Principal Records Specialist at The National Archives UK, and his colleagues. Our project received much attention once a blog article written by Pete and Jan appeared in a TNA newsletter in 2022. We were most fortunate to receive additional help from across the globe following this.

Working on the Project

The Index project was co-ordinated by me under the guidance and in collaboration with Pete and Jan. From Australia to Wales, we sent data files by email and caught up using online meetings. We also spent hundreds of hours transcribing in FamilySearch Affiliated Libraries, such as at FHWA. We are most grateful for the additional



"Blow, my bully boys, blow!"

By Way of Cape Horn: four months on a Yankee Clipper p.104 (no copyright; AI coloured)

contribution of our volunteer team in completing the rest of the Index and saving us a good six months of work at least.

To monitor the progress of transcribing the 443 films, Pete and Jan dedicated a page on CLIP to show films/pieces completed by way of pastel green boxes. Additionally, I set up my own simple count spreadsheet to mark each completed film. Throughout the project, I watched as blank white lines gradually became immersed in pastel green and the percentage count moved towards 100. It was a fascinating experience.

We used CSV files to send data for ease of transmission and use. Each file was cross-checked using various techniques ranging from voice text proofreading to algorithms (just one of the endless array of ingenious tools created by Pete and Jan along the way).

Whereas we found clerical errors in the original system, overall, we were most impressed by the consistency and dedication shown by the clerks at the Register of

Shipping back in the 1840s and 1850s. They performed an almost impossible task with an uncanny regularity and professionalism. Hats off to them.

The Port Rotation Numbers Index

The Port Rotation Numbers Index (the "Index") took almost three years to complete and is now available online. It was a collaboration between me, and Pete and Jan Owens of CLIP and was created by transcribing 443 films or boxes of shipping records available at The National Archives UK (TNA) or on FamilySearch <https://www.familysearch.org/search/>. It identifies a ship by way of its unique Port Rotation Number (PRN). Effectively, the Index includes every ship in a UK port in the year 1851. Additionally, two separate indexes (BT162/19⁵ and BT111⁶) were number crunched by Pete and Jan and incorporated to allow interpolation of PRNs for each port. These added details of over 120,000 entries to the shipping database on CLIP. Helping us with the transcriptions was a small team

Seafaring Ancestors (Cont.)

of volunteers recruited from across the globe.

Using the Index and Interpreting the Results

The Index may be searched here: <https://crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsPR>. By entering a PRN into the search engine, the index provides a ship's name, tonnage, and its number at its port of registry. Crucially, the Index will also give a link to locate Crew Lists and Schedules, which will be found on digital images at the FamilySearch website, or in a box at TNA under Series BT 98.

Crew Lists may also be found online at any FamilySearch Centre or affiliated library (such as FHWA). The schedules/lists are held on digitised films (Image Group Numbers), which are located via searching the catalogue on FamilySearch. Films are arranged by year and port under series BT 98. The search result from CLIP provides each film number with direct links to it. (These films have recently also become available using Full Text search on FamilySearch. The Index can be used to complement the results from Full Text Search.)

Further technical details on using the Index and interpreting results can be found by following the Notes link on CLIP at <https://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsPR>. Further details of the project, complete with a case study, can be found here: <https://crewlist.org.uk/about/portrotation> and <https://crewlist.org.uk/casestudies/casestudy4>

Crew Lists

The importance of crew list information cannot be overstated. Crew lists are one of the greatest



sources of social, family, maritime and economic history available to us. They provide details of voyages that took days, weeks, months or even years to complete. They provide shipping information such as tonnage, registration and year, voyage details, cargo carried, names of masters and apprentices, plus food and provisions given to the crew. For crew members, they can show age and place of birth, ticket number, name of previous ship, date, and place of joining and leaving the ship, capacity, signature, and amount of pay received. This information allows us to build a comprehensive detail of a mariner's career.

Outcomes – A snippet of William's career

My ancestor William had many voyages listed in his records. Using the Index, I have been fortunate enough to trace his career in over sixty ships, making well over 100 voyages! A sample of his career

progression from Seaman to Master is shown in the table: *William Hamersley's Voyages*.

This is just a small, abbreviated sample from William's career. The Index has allowed me to plot his movements around the world on given dates. I have also discovered his earnings and state of living. When on foreign voyages, I have even discovered what he was eating on different days of the week!

Further Reading and Information

Full details on Port Rotation Numbers, including background information on the Indexing project and its creation and use, are given here:

<https://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsPR> <https://www.crewlist.org.uk/about/portrotation>

Acknowledgements

Working on this project has been a fascinating adventure for me, and I am very proud to have been involved in it. When I first embarked on it,

Seafaring Ancestors (Cont.)

William Hamersley's Voyages [1851 to 1854]:
From Seaman to Master

Ship, Port Registration/ Year & PRN	Dates From & To	Voyages	Capacity
<i>Boyne</i> of London, 411/1849 :5705-64	18 Jan 1851 to 10 Feb 1851	Hartlepool-London-Sunderland	Seaman
<i>Harriet</i> of North Shields, 105/1848 :105- 124	22 Feb 1851 to 1 Jun 1851	London-Shields, Hamburg-Shields-London	Seaman
<i>Fortuna</i> of Whitby, 67/1847 :109-104	11 Jun 1851 to 11 Jul 1851	London-Shields, Shields-London-Whitby	Mate
<i>Iberia</i> of London, 52/1851 :6156-64	5 Aug 1851 to 22 Oct 1851	2 voyages Hartlepool-London	Seaman
<i>Dapper</i> of London, 240/1845 :3683-64	1 Oct 1851 to 31 Dec 1851	3 voyages London-Hartlepool- London	Seaman then Mate
<i>Dapper</i> of London, 240/1845 :3683-64	17 Jan 1852 to 30 Jun 1852	5 voyages London-Hartlepool- London	Mate
<i>Dapper</i> of London, 240/1845 :3683-64	1 Jul 1852 to 31 Dec 1852	6 voyages London-Hartlepool- London	Mate
<i>Dapper</i> of London, 240/1845 :3683-64	1 Jan 1853 to 16 Mar 1853	2 voyages London-Hartlepool- London	Mate
<i>John Cock</i> of London, 309/1853 :7239-64	May 1853 to 10 Apr 1854	4 voyages London-NE England-London	Master

I knew very little about maritime research. Contacting Pete and Jan Owens of CLIP was the best decision I made. It is through their skills, expertise and guidance I have acquired knowledge of merchant shipping I never knew existed! I cannot thank them enough for their contribution and the sheer hard work they both put into the project. The ground-breaking discoveries we made would not have happened without them.

Transcribing over 440 films in just over two years would not have been possible without the help of a worldwide team of volunteers from Australia, New Zealand, England, and Wales. Some I sat and worked alongside, such as my two daughters and FHWA member Robert Holloway. My thanks to every one of the team - it was a pleasure working with you. Those who worked on the Index are acknowledged on CLIP <https://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsPR>

I am also grateful for the assistance

of Bruno Pappalardo and his colleagues at The National Archives UK for encouragement, support, and contribution to the Index. Having Bruno and his team on board was a great boost to the project.

All research has a personal side. Research takes time, and time is both precious and personal to us all. My sincere thanks to everyone

who willingly gave their time to this project.

I sincerely hope readers and future researchers find this article useful. I hope your quest to discover more about your seafaring ancestors will be greatly advanced by using the **Port Rotation Number Index**.

RESOURCES

1. BT113 The National Archives UK – Board of Trade: Registry of Shipping and Seamen: Register of Seamen's Tickets
2. BT115 The National Archives UK – Board of Trade: Registry of Shipping and Seamen: Alphabetical Register of Masters
3. BT 98 The National Archives UK – Board of Trade: Registry of Shipping and Seamen: Agreements and Crew Lists Series I
4. Christopher T & Michael J Watts My Ancestor was a Merchant Seaman SOG Enterprises Ltd 2011 Edition. This book is generally accepted as being "the" book for tracing merchant seamen. p144 states in regard to PRNs "a full understanding of how these numbers were allocated still eludes us"
5. BT 162/19 The National Archives UK – Board of Trade: Registry of Shipping and Seamen; Annual Lists of Ships Registered
6. BT 111 The National Archives UK- Board of Trade: Registry of Shipping and Seamen: Transcripts and Transactions, Indexes to Transcripts





They came by ship

Liana Fitzpatrick | Member # 9810

The Convict, Enrolled Pensioner Guards, Military and Western Australian Interest Groups combined to create a wonderful free event *They Came By Ship* (TCBS) on Saturday 2 August 2025 for National Family History Month.

The committee organising the event included members from all four groups. Angela Heymans (Military), Jo Hyland (Convicts), Teresa Handcock (EPG), and Terri Usher, Liana Fitzpatrick and Pauline Basso (WA group). Terri did a mountain of work leading up to the event but unfortunately was unwell and couldn't be there on the day.

Months of planning, meetings, writing and seeking story contributions went into the delivery of the event. The first meeting of the committee was in March 2025, and they met every month leading up to the event to discuss every detail including the style of the posters, how the day would run and how the event would be advertised

externally via newspapers, radio, newsletters and flyers.

Each of the convenors encouraged members of their group to contribute stories. A template was designed and provided so that all the stories would be consistent in style and format. The stories were to include where the person came from, name of the ship, when it arrived and who the person travelled with, plus general information about the person. Working bees were held ahead of the day to prepare and laminate the posters and set up the room.

There were various elements to the day:

Posters featuring 55 stories of those who had come to WA by ship as well as explanatory panels spanning from the colonial era to post WWII migration. These displays were both interesting and varied.

A rolling PowerPoint presentation on the stories ran for most of the day.

Four talks were held: two by Jo Hyland on the Convicts of the Scindian, and two by Teresa Handcock on the Enrolled Pensioner Guards. Diane Oldman was scheduled to give a talk on researching 19th century ships to Western Australia but was unwell. Her talk was later given to the WA group in November.

Attendees were able to ask questions relating to their own family histories, read about stories, watch the visual display and chat to Society members.

The library was open for the day and freely accessible to visitors so they could see what our Society had to offer.

There was a magnificent morning and afternoon tea provided.

The weather that day was awful, cold and wet, so initially we only put out 16 chairs for the talks. But people kept arrivingand arriving.....and arriving.....and arriving. By the time, Liana gave



They came by ship (Cont.)

a welcome and introduction, there were over 30 people in the room and they were still arriving. The day exceeded all our expectations. The event was well-attended with approximately 70 people enjoying the event. As a bonus, a few people joined the society on the day.

Thank you to all who contributed in any way to the success of this event and to those who came along on the day. The story panels will continue to find use in future events and the collection may grow over time.

This was a great opportunity for the four groups to collaborate on an event and be a model for future

cooperation between Interest Groups. Already there are plans on a joint outing to Toodyay in October/November this year.

Some of the stories are in this journal plus more stories can be found on the FHWA website <https://www.fhwa.org.au/they-came-by-ship>

Nicoletta Salustri

On the *William Jardine* — Departed Plymouth
3 May 1852; Arrived Fremantle 1 August 1852

First Italian Woman in Western Australia

Carolyn Perriam | Member # 8979

Nicoletta was born in the Province of Ancona on the east coast of Italy in 1814. Her father was Bernardo **Salustri** but there is no record of her mother's name. It is believed Bernardo moved his family to Corfu in late 1814 or early 1815. There, Nicoletta met a young Irish soldier named James **O'Byrne** of the 51st Regiment, and when she was 15, they married on 7 January 1829. In 1834 James, Nicoletta and their baby daughter Mary set sail for England with the 51st Regiment.

It was to be the beginning of a journey that would eventually bring her family to Fremantle. In 1837 the family moved from Chatham in Kent to Belfast in Ulster where a son John was born but died young. June 1839 found Nicoletta and her family arriving in Sydney on the *Waverley*, along with 29 soldiers of the 51st Regiment—they were on their way to Hobart Town, Van

Diemen's Land. A second daughter, Ellen, was born during this journey. The family lived at Waterloo Point where three more children were born—Clementine, George and Ann. It was here that James was discharged as unfit for further service and their son George died. After returning to London in 1846, the family appears to have travelled back to Roscommon in Ireland as James' pension is listed on his discharge as being paid from there.

We next find Nicoletta and her family in the Channel Islands for five years as recorded in the 1851 census for Jersey. Prior to leaving on the convict ship *William Jardine*, Nicoletta gave birth to another daughter, Clara. James was one of the retired soldiers employed to guard the convicts on board ship during their voyage to Fremantle. Nicoletta and James had two more children: James Dominic

Author Carolyn Perriam is the great, great granddaughter of Nicoletta and Pensioner Guard James O'Byrne. Photo of Nicoletta from information and biography of Nicoletta and James by great grandson Bob Cook (deceased) and background information from "Italian Roots in Australian Soil" by Dr. J Gentilli.



and Bridget. James died in 1871, leaving Nicoletta a widow and her two youngest children still living with her. She passed away on the 10 February 1892 aged 77 years and is documented as being the first Italian woman to settle in Western Australia.

John Tyne

On the *Simon Taylor* — Departed London, 29 April 1842;
Arrived Fremantle, 20 August 1842

An 'Incorrigible' Parkhurst Boy

Joanne Hyland | Member # 13105

Thought to have been born in Dublin, Ireland around 1827, John **Tyne** was aged just ten years old when he was convicted for simple larceny at the Old Bailey in London on 11 December 1837. Together with 13-year-old boy, John **Watts** he stole a pair of shoes from the shop of William **Marchant** in Oxford Street. The shoes had been hanging at the door step before being taken by the boys. On being noticed by a bystander, they dropped the shoes and ran away, however the call of "Stop thief" was heeded and they were apprehended by a police constable shortly afterwards. They were each found guilty and sentenced to seven years transportation. Ten days later, on 21 December 1837, John was admitted to the foul-smelling place of misery, prison hulk *Euryalus* at Chatham.

Tyne was next sent to Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight which was used specifically for young male offenders up to the age of 15 years from 1838. John was one of the earliest juvenile prisoners to be sent there. The British Home Office subsequently decided to select a number of boys to remove from detention and provide them with a conditional pardon allowing them to work an apprenticeship in either an Australian or New Zealand colony. The first group of 18 carefully chosen Parkhurst boys to come to the Swan River Colony in Western Australia boarded the *Simon Taylor* departing 29 April 1842 and arriving 111 days later at Fremantle, 20 August 1842.

John Tyne was aged 14 years on arrival. By the end of that year, it was reported to the Governor that all the boys were employed; nine in a trade, six working on farms and three as domestic servants. John Tyne had already been labelled as 'incorrigible' before he was placed with John Henry **Monger** at York where Monger had a small wattle and daub hotel and carried out farming. His behaviour, it seems, did not improve, with Parkhurst Boys Guardian, John **Schoales**, having to write to Tyne in July 1844, reminding him of his

position and the rules to be abided by:

John Tyne, I am sorry to hear that all the correction you have had seems to be of no use to you. You still appear to be as idle and insolent as ever. Now I tell you in writing some plain rules for your conduct...

John's reply to that was to steal a packet of tea from Schoales a year later for which he served three months' imprisonment. John was put on the crew of the Colonial Government schooner *Champion* from December 1846, an occupation given to boys deemed incorrigible and unsuited to other work. Signs of improvement in his behaviour were short-lived, however, and he is thought to have absconded at King Georges Sound and joined an American whaler to escape his fate in the colony.



Three masted barque in style of the *Simon Taylor* which sailed to Western Australia from 1842 bringing assisted migrants and among them, the first contingent of 18 Parkhurst 'Apprentices'.

Elijah and Ann Dawson

On the *Warrior* — Departed from London and Portsmouth on October 23, 1829; arrived in Fremantle on March 11, 1830.

Waterloo Veteran: Swan River Pioneers

Angela Heymans | Member # 13105



Elijah and Ann Dawson

Elijah **Dawson**, the son of Richard Dawson and Ann **Hughes**, was born at Birchington on the Isle of Thanet in Kent. In 1813, at the age of 16, he joined the army and fought at Waterloo under Captain John **Molloy**. Although he was wounded in the battle, he followed Molloy to Ireland to fight the Irish Rebellion for two years.

A mutual respect developed, and Molloy offered Elijah an indentured position on leaving the Army in 1829.

On 11th May 1829, Elijah married Ann **Wakeham**. Together, they sailed for the Swan River Colony with the Molloys on the *Warrior*, a 485-tonne wooden-hulled, copper-sheathed sailing ship. They arrived on the 11 March 1830. The settlers camped in tents in Fremantle for some weeks before agreeing, at the request of Governor Stirling, to

form a settlement at the mouth of the Blackwood River. This became the townsite of Augusta.

In 1835, Elijah accompanied the Molloy family to the Vasse District until his indenture period expired. On the recommendation of Molloy, he was appointed to be the first police constable to the area and settled his family at Busselton as it became known. This brought him into confrontation with the First Nations Peoples, the Wadandi, including on one occasion when he was speared in the arm.

Elijah purchased 600 acres on the West Brook, near the current town of Vasse. They grew three acres of vines, with the wine they produced being bartered with the American whalers. Their original modest home was destroyed by

fire and replaced by the more solid brick homestead of Westbrook in the 1860s. It was heritage listed in 1999.

Elijah always commemorated the anniversary of Waterloo, celebrating his Waterloo medal on the 18 June each year. His children would endeavour to join him on the day, as did his good friend Captain Molloy, when naturally enough, the two would reminisce about their soldiering days.

Elijah and Ann who raised five children are both buried in the old Busselton Cemetery. Their descendants are now numbered in their hundreds, including the current Governor Chris Dawson.... and me!

Sources: A number of sources are available; please ask the author if you are interested.



Westbrook c1800

Amelia Sarah Wood

On the *Eglinton* — Departed Gravesend, England 11 April 1852;
Arrived coast north of Wanneroo 3 September 1852

Shipwrecked off the Western Australian Coast

Teresa Handcock | Member # 12650

Amelia Sarah Wood was baptised 13 November 1831 in Brighton, Kent UK, her parents were Peter and Sally née Coxon. In the 1841 census the family were living in nearby Little Hampton. In the 1851 census Amelia is a servant to the **Fauntleroy** family in London. Robert and Sarah Fauntleroy, four children and a servant were listed as passengers on the *Eglinton*: it is believed that Amelia was that servant.

The wreck of the *Eglinton* was a sensation in the Swan River Colony. The *Eglinton* was carrying general cargo and 65,000 gold sovereigns for the treasury, and these were eagerly awaited. But the ship was wrecked on what is known today as the Eglinton Rocks, not far from Alkimos.

Due to heavy weather the passengers remained on board for two days, and one lady drowned when a small lifeboat capsized in the surf. One of the male passengers walked to Fremantle to alert the authorities, and rescue boats and men from 99th Regiment set off. They were more concerned with recovering the gold and it was reported that some of the passengers resorted to walking to Perth from the wreck.

Amelia worked for the Fauntleroy family at Redcliffe, a farm on Guildford Road. Here she met Pensioner Guard John Law **Davis**,



Amelia Sarah Wood

and they married in 1856 and took up residence in a two-roomed cottage in West Guilford.

Eight children were born in the little cottage: Amelia would have been very busy. John died in 1870 when their youngest child was about two years old.

Amelia remarried in 1873 to John **Bates** who arrived on the ship *Racehorse* in 1865 after being convicted of arson. He had been both a soldier and brickmaker during his life. Amelia and John had two children together and continued to live in the Pensioner Guard cottage which was occupied by family members into the 1930s.



Top: EPG Cottage in 2019 and great grandson Dave Williams. Photo B. Handcock
Bottom: Objects recovered from Eglinton.

It is still standing and open to visitors.

John Bates died in 1899, and Amelia lived with their daughter Maria in her final years. She died in 1909 and is buried at Karrakatta Cemetery.

Sources:

1. Enrolled Pensioner Guard resources;
2. FamilyHistoryWA websites
3. Ancestry
4. WA Maritime Museum.

A letter sent from the *Aurora*

Louise Clarkson | Member # 12644

The authors of this letter were John Lodge and Harriet Lodge née Williams, my three-times great-grandparents. The letter was probably sent to John Lodge's stepmother, Ann Lodge (née Edwards; née Foulkes) and is reproduced here as it was published in the Bradford Observer of Thursday 6 August 1840 with the original spelling and punctuation. On the Aurora with John and Harriet, and surviving the voyage, was their five-year-old daughter, Elizabeth Margaret Lodge. Harriet gave birth to another daughter, Sarah Ellen Lodge a few weeks after landing at Petone. The entire story of their journey referred to—"as big as a book"—has not been found.

*To Mrs A. Lodge,
Islington Marble Works,
Broad-street, Birmingham*

Dear Mother,

I have taken the first opportunity of addressing these few lines to you. An English Wesleyan missionary was kind enough to send this letter. I am happy to say we arrived safe to anchor at our new home—a beautiful country it is. All the men went on shore on Friday, to work for the Company; we had no other person to apply to, as we are the first Colonists that arrived, out of the five ships that left London at one time.

You may guess what a wilderness we had to go to nothing but trees and a few native huts, and surrounded by the native savages. The chief and head men of the tribe are clothed with a blanket and nothing more. Some of them had a shirt on, and some of them with a jacket, without trousers or anything else. The children are running quite naked. These articles were given by different English people that have been about the island since we have been here. The Company has supplied them with clothing in exchange for the land.

There is no lack of food for any one that can eat potatoes and fish—such as salmon, cod, eels, soals



Wellington Harbour, N.Z., 1841, New Zealand, by Major Charles Heaphy VC. Purchased 1968 from Wellington City Council Picture Purchase Fund. Te Papa (1968-0024-1). No Copyright restrictions.

[sic], shrimps, oysters, muscles, cockles and a great abundance of them with a great quantity of birds of the finest description; the pigeons are twice as large as our English ones. There is also an abundance of Indian corn, sown by the natives. Plenty of curly greens, which grow wild without any cultivation. These articles are to be had very cheap; when I say cheap, I mean a piece of pig-tail tobacco weighing 1 oz., value 3d, brings a basket of potatoes weighing about 30lb, including the basket, made of flax. It cannot but say that the country is far finer than any of our English land it is more like France in climate. The missionaries in some parts of the island grow the finest of grapes and figs in the open air without any covering to them.

This appears to have been written by the husband, and now the wife begins...

Dear mother,

John seems to say it is my turn now to begin. What would I have given if I had stopped in England a little longer. We have all had pretty good health on our passage; but my dear boy he seemed as usual, with that short cough, sometimes better and sometimes worse, until it pleased God to afflict him more severely on the 20th December, 1839, with inflammation on the lungs.

A letter sent from the *Aurora* (Cont.)

He was bled, and every attention that could be paid to him by the doctor of the vessel; but it pleased Almighty God to free him from all pain, and give him a crown of glory on the 24th Dec. only four days from the time he was first taken—patient child, never one murmur was heard from his lips. It was almost too much for me. I always built too many hopes could not give him up was obliged to be dragged from my child. What would I have given to have been on English ground to have buried him. He died on the 24th, say 12 o'clock at midnight, and was buried 3 o'clock in the afternoon same day. All attended but his father and I. Funeral service read—bell tolled and my dear boy was sewed in some canvass [sic] and committed to the waves.

I had him opened by the doctor—a skilful[sic] man and he gave us every satisfaction that if he had been on land he would not have lived more than six months. His lungs were gone all but the size of an inch. If he had been on land he most probably would have gone into a decline. He is gone to where I would give all the world to be by his side.

Elizabeth is well; she has her little poorly bouts, the same as when in England; if the Lord spares her I shall find her very useful. I shall like the country very well. It is a complete paradise, and will be in the course of a short time: but I shall always be in dread of the natives; they are very harmless but I don't think I can make myself happy.

We shall have the missionaries amongst us very soon; then we shall be comfortable—I hope we shall; we are in a land of plenty—no house rent—no taxes plenty of wild pigs and ducks; all sorts of beautiful birds and fish just, you may say, for picking up. We arrived here safe on the 23d January, 1840 still living on board. We intended to have sent you the history of our voyage; it is written, and is as large as a book, so that we could not send it by this dispatch. You may expect it as soon as an opportunity offers. We expect Mr. Bumby here very soon to come and preach to us in about two months; and then I shall have an opportunity to write again and tell you more. Any body [sic] wishing to come here to purchase land, I should advise them to wait until they come here. It is rather hilly; but very rich soil. The doctor would have a good chance of coming out as he might come as doctor to a vessel and be paid for it; in my next I shall give you a more full account.”

(Here the husband begins again)

“My engagement with the Company is £1 per week, with 10lbs of meat per week, 7lbs flour, 6oz tea, 7oz sugar, and a superabundance of potatoes; a place to live in and plenty of wood to burn, as they burn nothing else here. This is only till the land purchasers get their sections of land; and then they begin to build a town; then our wages will be more than double, as there will not be quarter enough hands. There is not coming out more than two a piece for the land purchasers.

“Any one coming out must expect to have a good knocking about; as we were tossed about, first in a valley then on a mountain. Some part of the time we were battened down, and the sea swamping over us by tuns at a time, knocking all our things out of place, breaking crocks, upsetting our dinner and breakfast. A miserable condition we were in at times. We also had a dreadful gale of wind off the Cape of Good Hope, which took away our main-mast and foremast—a complete wreck. But that was not the greatest danger, we were within a hundred yards of striking against a rock at Land's End, England.

The sailors say it was the narrowest escape they ever had. I can fill a volume, but cannot have time, as the Missionary leaves here for Van Diemen's Land tomorrow morning. I must now tell you that I very much regret not bringing out with me a gun with powder and shot, also two or three pairs of blankets.

I am the only person that came out without a gun. As we are obliged to shoot our own birds, there is not one to be purchased here. Mr. Wallace is writing to Mr. Drake in New-street. Any letters or parcels you may wish to send, may be sent in Mr. Wallace's goods. I must conclude by giving both our very best love to brothers and sisters, and to yourself doubly, not forgetting shopmates and friends.

“I should like you to forward this to Liverpool as early as possible, that they may know we have arrived safe. God bless them all and you all, if I never should see you again. If ever they should come, the rough will be done for them. Whatever my circumstances may be, should any of my family come here, they shall share as I share, if it be the last bit. God bless you all twenty times.

Your ever affectionate son, J. Lodge

FamilyHistoryWA Awards 2026

Citation for Service Award

John Wright

Member # 9999

John Wright joined the Society in 2003 and has always been generous with his time in sharing his Scottish and general research skills. He started volunteering as a Library Assistant in 2009 and has always been known as a person you need to see if you are researching Scottish ancestry. He has managed the ScotlandsPeople subscription site credits for many years and been the webpage Editor for the Scottish Special Interest Group. Dubbed 'Mr Scotland' by the Librarian, she appreciated the times he's sorted out small queries, tested equipment, and helped her with the library. For John Wright's years of service to the Society he is awarded a Service Award.

Citation for Service Award

Maureen Robbins

Member # 12145

Maureen joined the Society in 2010 and two years later became a Library Assistant, joining the Friday team helping people with their research. In early 2021 she took on the task of compiling the library roster to ensure we had volunteers to cover the opening hours, and it has been regularly produced since then. In 2026 Maureen joined the Membership Team and assists with filing. FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Maureen Robbins has given the Society by awarding her a Service Award.

Citation for Merit Award

Christine Harris

Member # 5000

Christine Harris joined FamilyHistoryWA in 1994 and in 2018 took the role of Information Technology Manager and joined the Management Committee. In 2019 Christine was elected Vice President, a position she still holds. She has been on the Finance Committee and the IT Committee since 2018, upgraded computer network, established the Family Tree Maker computer User Group and was the Convenor of the Eastern Australian Special Interest Group until it went into recess. In 2023 Christine joined the Board of the People of WA Ghost Towns Project.



Award Winners Back, L to R: John Wright, Zoe Inman, Neil Bradley, Ian Dew, Liana Fitzpatrick, Peter Hamersley
Front, Maureen Robbins, Olive Sampson, Colleen Fancote. Absent- Christine Harris and Marilyn Dimond



She has delivered numerous presentations to FHWA members and organisations to share information about the Ghosts project. The Society acknowledges Christine Harris' significant contribution by awarding her a Merit Award.

Citation for Merit Award
Colleen Fancote
 Member # 5141

Colleen Fancote has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 1993 when she was based in Carnarvon where she assisted in setting up the Carnarvon Genealogy Group, which at the time was a branch of FHWA. She returned to Perth in 1997 where she joined the Armadale House Group. Colleen was appointed to the position of Affiliated Organisations/Groups Liaison Officer between 1998 and 2000, then joined the Management Committee from 1999 to 2002.

In 2001 Colleen began volunteering at the Genealogy Centre in the State Library of Western Australia and continues in that role today. In 2005 she started the Kelmscott Genealogy Group, which became FHWA's first daytime house group and then the Armadale Family Tree Group in 2017.

This year Colleen has been instrumental in making available the *St Mary in the Valley Anglican Cemetery, Kelmscott* data for the FHWA website. FamilyHistoryWA

Citation for award of Life Membership of FamilyHistoryWA

Neil Bradley | Member # 8276

Neil Bradley has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 1999.

Neil has dedicated over 26 years of exceptional service to the Society. He has held pivotal leadership roles, most notably as the Convenor of the Finance Committee and Treasurer since 2010, where he continues to oversee financial management and provide guidance to volunteers in financial functions. He also represents FHWA's interests on the Board of the Strata Management Committee from May 2022 and the Awards Committee in 2024.

As a member of the Convict Special Interest Group, he was instrumental in the Convict Website project. This has included populating the website with known records and making the video *"Introduction to the (Convict) website"*. As well he has delved into the AJCP online, a significant resource of convict records, integrating them into the website and making them available to the wider membership in Genie Links.

Neil was the Inaugural Convenor for The Master Genealogist (TMG) SIG in 2006 and has continued to lead that group for nearly two decades. He has been a presenter for the Activities program, most notably delivering sessions to members and interstate groups on researching Western Australian family history. Beyond his formal roles, Neil has been a tireless volunteer in the set up, and representation, of FHWA at community events such as Government House Open Days and Have A Go days.

Neil's technical expertise has been a cornerstone of the Society's modernisation. He served as Assistant to the Webmaster from 2012 to 2017. His ongoing commitment to the Society's infrastructure is evident in his work providing and setting up IT equipment for meetings, including the complex transition to online and hybrid meeting formats. He has also contributed to the accessibility of records by indexing family names from the library's family histories collection for the Library Catalogue. Neil Bradley's multifaceted contributions—spanning financial stewardship, technical innovation, and contributions to family history research—make him a highly deserving recipient of Life Membership.

FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Neil Bradley has given the Society by awarding him Life Membership. 28 June 2026



wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Colleen Fancote has given the Society by awarding her a Merit Award.

Citation for Merit Award
Olive Sampson
 Member # 9692

When Olive joined the Society in 2003, she started volunteering at Wanneroo Library, helping people with their family history. She did this for about five years then moved to Joondalup Library where she spent the next 18 years helping people with their research in weekly two-hour sessions.

Olive has recently retired from this role so it is a fitting time to acknowledge her years of service. From 2008 Olive has also hosted the Northern Suburbs House Group monthly meetings. FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Olive Sampson has given the Society by awarding her a Merit Award.

Citation for Certificate of Appreciation
Zoe Inman
 Member # 14845

Zoe Inman has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 2020 and became involved in the Writers Special Interest Group, joining the Committee and becoming a critiques group leader. She is nominated for her skills in learning how to use and develop the Writers SIG webpage.

Citation for award of Life Membership of FamilyHistoryWA

Marilyn Dimond | Member # 3943

Marilyn Dimond has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 1991.

Marilyn has contributed significantly to the Society's ongoing success, particularly through its longstanding relationship with the State Library of Western Australia and the development of its online presence. From the time she joined FHWA Marilyn became involved in a range of activities. She joined the North of England and New Zealand Special Interest Groups, joined the PR Committee, helped organise FHWA displays at public events, and volunteered in the FHWA library.

Soon after she began volunteering at the State Library, Marilyn became coordinator of the State Library volunteers in 1993, a role she has held ever since. Her responsibilities have included inducting new volunteers, arranging professional development for volunteers, and preparing the roster. In this role, over 33 years, Marilyn has liaised with the State Library through its many iterations of the Family History Centre. She works with library staff on collection development and access to the genealogical reference collection, has contributed to Western Ancestor over many years, and volunteered at National History Month events at the library.

Marilyn's research skills and knowledge of family history are extensive. Her knowledge of the State Library and its collections have been invaluable to volunteers, library clients, and staff. The State Library recognised this contribution in awarding Marilyn the Terry Campbell Award for Service Excellence in 2024. Marilyn has also played an integral role in developing FamilyHistoryWA's technology and online presence.

As a member of the Management Committee in 1995, she became Convenor of the Internet Sub-committee, which developed the Society's first website. As WAGSNet Convenor from 2000 to 2020, Marilyn established and managed the member-based discussion board. She also served as Internet Officer until 2009. Marilyn's dedicated service has contributed greatly to the Society's growth, both online and within the Western Australian community.

FamilyHistoryWA acknowledges the outstanding service and dedication Marilyn Dimond has given the Society by awarding her Life Membership.



Zoe decided what information should be placed on the webpage, and how to best display it. She also created a digital history of the Writers SIG – a resume of images and music to chronicle the history of the SIG. FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Zoe Inman has given the Society by awarding her a Certificate of Appreciation.

Citation for Special Interest Group Award
Liana Fitzpatrick
 Member # 9810

Liana Fitzpatrick has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 2003. While Liana has already been awarded life membership of FamilyHistoryWA, it is to recognise her work with the Writers Special Interest Group, that she receives this award. In March 2018, after attending the AFFHO Sydney Congress, Liana was keen to start a group that encouraged people to use their research to write their stories, and to help each other with editing.

By September of 2018, the Writers SIG was formed. Liana served as Convenor for its first five years and has remained on the committee since then. During COVID, the Group continued to meet online and held a meeting in a Bayswater Park to maintain its friendly community. Members then decided that alternating face-to-face meetings with online meetings was a good mix as it

allowed country members to join in, and those who preferred to meet in person could also meet. FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge Liana Fitzpatrick's significant contribution to the Writers Special Interest Group by awarding her the Special Interest Group Award.

Citation for Special Interest Group Award
Ian Dew | Member # 9410

Ian Dew has been a member of FamilyHistoryWA since 2002. In 2012 Ian joined the committee of the Computer Special Interest Group, a position he held until March 2013, when he became Co-Convenor of the Group with Julie Martin, then Convenor in 2019 until the end of 2025. During this period, the group changed its name to the Technology SIG. This group celebrated its 40th anniversary and Ian compiled a history of the Group.

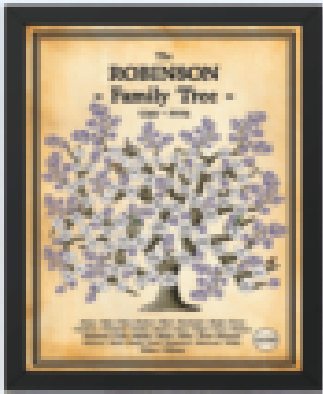
In early 2026 Ian became the Society's Liaison Officer. In this role he is doing a sterling job in having regular meetings with all the SIGs and House Groups to encourage collaboration and fresh ideas amongst them.

FamilyHistoryWA wishes to acknowledge the service and dedication Ian Dew has given the Society by awarding him the Special Interest Group Award.

Citation for Special Interest Groups Award
Peter Hamersley
 Member # 11940

Peter Hamersley joined the Society in 2010 and became the Convenor of the London South England and Wales Special Interest Group in 2013. He spends a time ensuring that meetings are well planned and are both interesting and helpful for future research. He regularly brings current news and updated content to the Group and has also volunteered at the Perth Royal Show between 2013 and 2016, and at numerous open days at our Society's premises. Peter is involved in the Crew List Index Project and in particular on the port rotation numbers, giving access to the records of 500,000 seafarers for researchers. The Society acknowledges Peter Hamersley's significant contribution to the London South England and Wales SIG by awarding him a Special Interest Group Award.

annie@acornfamilytrees.com.au



CUSTOM FAMILY TREE ART

ACORN

Handcrafted by a small business in Perth, WA

www.acornfamilytrees.com.au

Honouring 30 years of Commitment and Community Spirit

Busselton Family History Society

Daphne Holgate: Awarded Life Membership of The Busselton Family History Society at a General Meeting of the Society on Sunday 28 September 2025.

Daphne's journey with the Busselton Family History Society spans three decades marked by dedication, generosity of spirit, and a deep love for local history. Her story begins in 1995 when she first joined the Busselton Branch of the WA Genealogical Society (now FamilyHistoryWA – FHWA). Daphne was member number 5732, marking the start of her enduring relationship with the Society.

Daphne's initial membership signified more than just joining a club—it was the beginning of a life's work devoted to community connection and the preservation of local heritage. When FHWA dissolved the branch system the Busselton Branch became

incorporated as an independent Affiliated Society of FHWA under the then name Busselton and Districts Genealogical Research Centre Inc. Daphne's membership number changed to 39 of the newly formed group.

No longer dependent on FHWA, fundraising became essential for the purchase of research materials such as books, magazines, microfiche, stationery etc. and for operating expenses. Daphne was a willing participant in many of the various fundraising efforts and served on the Committee in 2007 and 2008.

For many years, Daphne has been a steadfast presence on roster duty, always available on the first Wednesday of each month. Her knowledge in local history became legendary within the Society. Whenever a member was searching for information on Busselton or its surrounding regions, Daphne was the first port of call.



Daphne Holgate

Daphne's enduring presence is woven into the very fabric of the Busselton Family History Society. She embodies the values of dedication, generosity, and respect for history.

Daphne, we are truly honoured to have you as part of our Society. Thank you for everything you have contributed to the Busselton Family History Society.



New Librarians for FamilyHistoryWA

We are pleased to introduce the two new librarians who are now sharing this important role: Sue Goss (who will also be on the Management Committee) and Sue Aldenton. Here they are pictured at the AGM with past-librarian Edwina Shooter standing between them.

Rose: The story of a more contemporary journey

Carol Simmonds | Member # 14523

Let's assume you are thinking about writing up your family history. You have spent years and years of your limited spare time—and equally limited financial resources—finding out who your family was. You still have some gaps, but you think you have got enough to tell a story about them.

Let's also assume you are still wondering if it is worth the effort. Why 'go public' and tell everyone else about your family? They lived, they died, so what?

What if they lived in Europe in the lead-up to the Second World War? So did many millions of others.

What if they were also Jewish? Millions were at that time and wondering if they had a future? Any future? Of course, millions of them did not, because of the Holocaust.

What if they decided they would try to change that future, by getting out of Europe while they still could. There were not many places they could go even if they had valid passports and visas. Many did not but, if they were lucky, they might have been able to tap into a loose network of quiet, largely unrecognised Good Samaritans, family, friends, and strangers alike, working hard to get at least some of them out before all hope was lost.

The strangers may have included various diplomats in cities like Vienna and Budapest whose 'nefarious' activities are only now starting to get the attention they deserve. Largely at their own initiative, and in the face of opposition from their bosses at home, these unsung public servants, known better for their 'stuffed shirts' and 'follow the official line'

mind-sets, began issuing fraudulent visas and passports to tens of thousands of people trying to get away from the-politically-correct-line-of-thought pressures gaining significant traction in Europe at the time.¹

But back to our family history focus. What if your family found their way onto one of the last ships to leave Europe at this time—a French vessel by the name of *President Doumer*—which took a boatload of fleeing Jews to Shanghai in 1938—39.

Like many of the families on that boat, your family would have had to leave so much behind, including other family members, to take advantage of the few last remaining opportunities to escape a frightful fate.

There was no guarantee, however, that where they were going would give them the future they craved. At the time, Shanghai was a huge

metropolis of over four million people, but barely one hundred years before had been a small fishing village and market town in China until forced open to European trade after the First Opium War (1839—42).

As a treaty port, Shanghai had rapidly become a major commercial and fishing hub in Asia and its polyglot population even included some Jews who had left Europe one, two, three or more generations before, some to escape their own looming Armageddons. Think Russo-Japanese War (1904—05) and the Bolshevik Revolution (1917—23).

Even so, in 1937—38, Shanghai was facing its own Armageddon. Parts of it—the parts still under Chinese sovereignty—had been conquered by the Japanese in 1937 at the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937—45), and they would finish the job a few years later.



Zylberstein Family with Rose as a baby.

Rose (Cont.)

In between, however, the good ship *President Doumer* would deposit its load of refugees on Shanghai's famed waterfront walk, the Bund, overlooking the city's elegant European-style architecture. The refugees were freely able to enter the port, even if they did not have genuine—or fraudulent—visas and passports.²

After getting processed at what had been the first high-rise condominium to be built anywhere in China, the refugees would have met with one or more relief groups funded by the United States and local Jews who helped them find shelter or *heims* where they could stay, albeit in over-crowded conditions, until they found something better.

Those lucky enough to find accommodation with indoor plumbing considered themselves fortunate, even if they had to share toilet and washing facilities with other families. Others had to manage Chinese style with a bucket and the 'honeypot'—a wagon pulled by a coolie who came each morning to collect the refuse. Hot water was purchased from the alley water seller and water for drinking had to be boiled.

Many of the refugees, like the Zylberstein family we have been following so far, set themselves up in business: Joseph Zylberstein, the family head, ended up making raincoats designed for China's typhoon season.

During this period, the Japanese progressively took over Shanghai's international settlements. While putatively allies of Nazi Germany, Japan pursued its own foreign policy and kept accepting Jewish immigrants until August 1941.

Then came Pearl Harbour and the whole world went to war. The Nazis

regarded the Japanese as 'Honorary Aryans' and tried to persuade them to adopt the Final Solution. The Japanese were not enamoured of this particular policy and eventually met them half-way, by setting up a restricted Ghetto for stateless refugees in Hongkew, Shanghai at the beginning of 1943.

Coincidentally that was where the Zylberstein family lived at the time. So, life could go on. There were new regulations to obey, food rationing was imposed, living conditions became more and more congested and diseases like malaria

more about it, also covers the next few decades of the family's life until the children, now grown-up and facing life in an increasingly unstable part of the world, chose to migrate to Australia, where they still live with their families.³

Their story is a very poignant one of being at the receiving end of a lot of the hurricanes of history over which they had little or no control. This would also be the case for most of our forebears. They may not always have been aware they were in the line of sight of such events, and believe their stories are insignificant

Rose was born in the 1940s while her family was still living in Shanghai. The family left for Israel in 1948 and then Melbourne in 1956. Her last move was to Perth, WA with her late husband Robert Raymen in 1987. These days Rose keeps active by writing for the Jewish Historical Society of New York and several other genealogical societies in the United States and Australia and will soon have a contribution published in the National Trust of WA Online News.

and dysentery were rife in the Ghetto. In addition, American funds ceased to arrive, the hospitals those funds had kept going had to close down, and medicines were always in short supply.

Nonetheless, the children were able to go to a school run by their Jewish community and the Zylberstein family was able to grow. A third child was born on 8 June 1944.

The family survived the bombing of Shanghai although 31 other refugees did not. The war ran its course, but the Zylberstein family stayed put until 1948 when they took advantage of a relocation scheme offered to Shanghai Jews prepared to emigrate to Israel.

The Zylberstein family history, which is now in the FHWA Library for those who would like to read

to anyone but themselves. The truth is, however, that all of us, particularly today's generations of politicians and public servants, need to be constantly reminded of the broader effect of politics and public affairs.

Thank you, Rose, for telling us your family history.

Notes

1. Roger Moorhouse, *The Forgers: The Forgotten Story of the Holocaust's Most Audacious Rescue Operation* (New York: Basic Books, 2023).
2. Although they probably needed them to board the *President Doumer* which, like many ships of the day, required its passengers to have some evidence of an 'end destination' before they would issue tickets to them.
3. Rose M Raymen, *The Story of the Zylberstein Family* (self-published). Just ask for R35156 or search the shelves for 929.2 ZYL

Eating Pearl Ashes

Christine Fairhall | Member # 11416

A small album of recipes. The writing is over 135 years old and is fading. This old book measures 70 by 93 mm (2½ inches by 3½). The penmanship is small, pointy and fine. Inside the cover is a very skilled little pencil drawing of an old church with a few teetering gravestones and several English yew trees, similar to Ruskin's work in style and quality. The little album, each page a different pastel colour, contains 35 pre -1890 recipes.

My mother said the books' owner had been her grandmother, Kate Eva, born in Penzance, Cornwall, 1844. There are many photos of Kate in their big album, and one can almost see her reputed golden hair and dark eyes.

Kate died in St Arnaud, central Victoria in 1890. Not a long life, but much-mourned by her family, her daughters even keeping for a long time a couple of her silk frocks and they said the silk was so heavy that the dresses could stand by themselves. I have a large tortoiseshell hair comb that was hers, another, better quality being more translucent, fell apart and crumbled recently. I also used to have Kate's Cornish prayer book, famous for asking God for protection "from things that go wump in the night". As a child I used to return to it for sheer delight in the tone of it, embedded as these simple words were a very solemn matter.

Her life had taken her at ten years of age from Penzance, Cornwall, to Melbourne in Australia and later, marriage there in a Church of England ceremony to Thomas Leary. Thence to Dunedin New Zealand and a Roman Catholic ceremony there for her husband's faith. Further onward with their many children to Australia, and the Victorian gold mining town of St Arnaud. The recipe book reflects the need for large meals that were much work to produce, indicating too, a need for domestic help which happily they could afford. Her uncle was a wealthy man married to a sister of Lord Courtney, first Earl of Penrith and her husband was a pharmacist, so they had a middle or upper middle class identity and appear to have eaten quite well.



Kate Leary née Eva

Kate's life in Dunedin would have been focussed on her domestic commitments, particularly as Thomas had not only his business to occupy him, but he was a very committed Catholic and also choir trainer and soloist at St Joseph's, meaning he had less time at home. He was remembered well from the 1870's and appears as much a musician as a pharmacist:

Mr Leary was for a time our chief basso – a great voice, very sonorous and powerful . . . this is one of my best recollections of the good old days at St. Joseph's.

I also found a photo of Thomas Leary's pharmacy in Dunedin, a charming little cabinet of a shop with an upper story in which they may have lived. And an 1877 photograph was published of him with a male choir that included his Anglican brother-in-law entitled "Some Dunedin Musicians of 1877" so here again is an indication of his busyness outside the home. I even have the set of scores they are holding which include a song "Soldiers gay are we, we, we".

Unlike Kate, Thomas Leary's more remote ancestry is unknown as his parents eloped—rejected by all four of their own parents. In 1833, they had travelled steerage from Dublin to Longford in Tasmania with their first three children, on the *Strathfieldsaye*. Thomas Jnr was born in Longford, Tasmania in 1837,

Pearl Ashes (Cont.)



Thomas Leary

when Catholics did not yet have a built church or it appears, even record keeping: his birth year is only known from a birthday book.

There, Thomas Snr made furniture, was a pawnbroker, and was much called-upon for jury service. Later in life he became publican of the O'Connell Inn in Launceston, a hotel name that implies a moderated fury against the English overlords in Ireland.

Can one get to know Kate through her recipes? My surprise was that one cannot because by studying her little book one realises that it could not have been her work despite my mother's belief that it was. I know very little about Kate's mother, Elizabeth Eva née Oliver, who had emigrated with it and of whom we have one pleasant, unaffected photograph. There is however one family anecdote involving her: she was at Kate's and did not agree how to serve a dish of cauliflower and irritated, reached

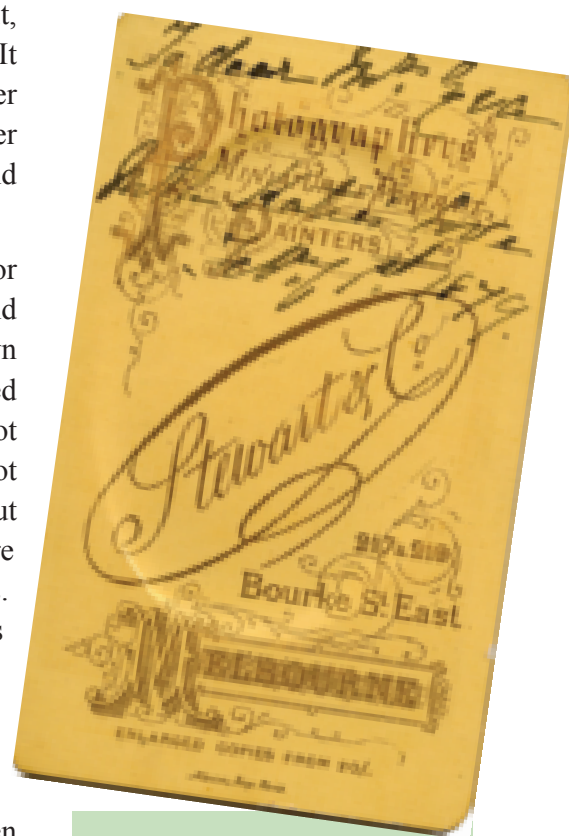
across the table and dealt with it, causing deathless resentment. It does suggest that Kate's mother had some conceit about her food knowledge, cooking, and presentation.

I have had this little album for many years now and beyond glancingly noticing an unknown ingredient long ago that I tried unsuccessfully to buy, I had not actually read *in* the book, had not *closely* examined it. I was about to discover that heirlooms are less significant unless one does. (Also dating some teaspoons that my ageing Mother had said were Kate's I found they had belonged not to my great grandmother but to hers). I then remembered Kate had written on the back of a photograph and suddenly realised the album is not in her handwriting.

I found that family interest in the recipe book has been superficial. No one in the family has questioned the little collections' ingredients, satisfied simply with owning this little book and conscientiously taking good care of it for ensuing generations. Much like with the inherited pedigree of another great grandmother and her well-documented English Civil War ancestors, all had noticed a knight or two and been satisfied--not caring about the individuals or even the regicide named there.

Reading the recipes was at first alarming—a poisoner? 'Pearl ashes'—would you eat those? Alum—again, suspect. And then comes 'volatile butter.' If anything so *un-volatile* comes to mind it has to be a lump of fat.

Searching online revealed the ordinariness of these substances



Kate Leary Handwriting

— the first two are eighteenth century leavening substances and the volatile butter is a cultured and expensive butter even more delicious than the 'sweet butter' in our everyday use. (The word 'volatile' refers to the chemistry involved.) There is somewhere down south in Western Australia I am told where this cultured butter may be bought, otherwise you must make your own and it is a lengthy process, yielding small quantities in relation to effort but very rewarding.

A wood burning stove is implied by directions to lift things on and off the fire. And in Australia's warm climate the volatile butter would have been kept in a container in salt water till needed and it does not keep well. It is named in only one recipe and that calls for a finishing knob of it, so

Pearl Ashes (Cont.)

one used this special ingredient sparingly. The Dough Nut recipe is the only one listing lard (boiling). Most recipes that called for butter, list tinned butter. The volatile butter would have had to be made at home. The gooseberry wine would also have been time consuming work. Who did the laundry?—a note says to get 25 litres (5 ½ gallons) of water nearly boiling, add ammonia and turpentine and soak the clothes for three hours: with such a huge workload women must have had, or longed ardently for, domestic help.

The recipes look rich and heavy. And alcoholic—one recipe calls for six tablespoons of sherry and brandy together. Even the pancakes contain a glass of sherry while others incorporate sherry and brandy together. Trifle calls for half a pint of sherry with six tablespoons of brandy. The heavy use of alcohol is startling. We are getting to know this cook at this point. Besides the recipe for gooseberry wine there is one for beer using hops.

Another recipe has a memo that the quantity of one ingredient is “too much” showing that the recipes were in use.

Are the recipes Cornish? The ingredients (ginger, treacle, gooseberries) suggests they are. The gingerbread recipe is very close to “Cornish Fairings”



Tiny sketch in the recipe book



Elizabeth Eva née Oliver

except that the online Cornish recipes call for lard and in the recipe book, the author has clearly preferred butter.

Online histories of leavening say pearlash[sic] dropped out of use after 1840 so before Kate was born. This also points to the earlier generation. And Kate was unlikely to be closely focussed on traditional Cornish recipes as she left Cornwall with her parents when she was a child. The recipes, though traditional Cornish recipes, show that in this album they are keeping up with the evolution of more and more chemical rising agents, although there are a couple of recipes using yeast and one using frothed egg whites as a rising which also had likely been known for a long time.

However pearl ash with alum, and also pearl ashes with ammonia powder was mainly used in the 17th and 18th centuries and much used by bakers. Its pungency from the oven is unhealthy to inhale. These ingredients would have been used pre-emigration (1854) and could originally have been Kate's grandmother's recipes—she was an Elizabeth too. This Elizabeth was born in Penzance in 1790; she remained there in the absence of both her emigrated children, Elizabeth and family to Melbourne, son Richard Oliver, an engineer, to New Zealand in 1860.

Ammonia powder was used for leavening gingerbread



Elizabeth Oliver 1863

nuts and required that they be thin to fully drive off the ammonia and avoid an unpleasant flavour. Rising agents such as bicarbonate of soda in four recipes, and cream of tartar in two would have been used in Australia because they only became available later.

Gooseberry wine used the latter and included barm too as the starter, barm being fermented malt liquor froth. And ultimately there was a cake using modern double-acting baking powder. The ginger beer uses cream of tartar and brewer's yeast. The sequence of the recipes in the album does not match the sequential evolution of the leavenings: I can only note and guess that the users opened the album at random to write in it.

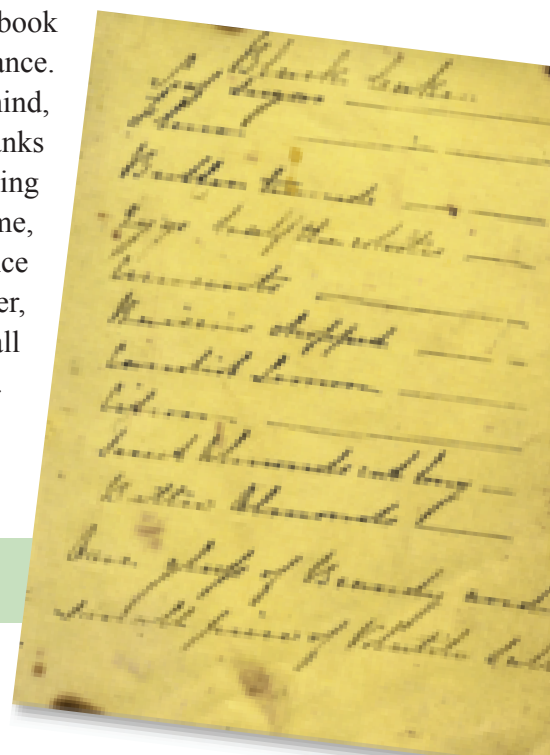
So who wrote them? The recipes' language looks modern, (granted that the recipes are cryptically expressed) but capital letters are used within sentences for ingredients more consistently early in the book so again there may have been two writers. Some of the recipes use the 'long s' f that resembles the lower case f as in the word 'glafs' for glass, now archaic but in use in the late 18th and early 19th centuries while elsewhere the modern "glass" is used, again suggesting more than one writer. Analysing handwriting especially within families is surely a forensic skill. The book's provenance suggests therefore that it was

a gift from the elder Elizabeth to her emigrating daughter Elizabeth, the older Elizabeth determined her daughter have with her some traditional Cornish recipes in a dainty little hard cover album, and from the younger Elizabeth, since they lost Kate early, to my grandmother, my mother and grateful me. (There were so many other possible claimants).

Unlike the weird sounding ingredients which turn out to be more or less safe there is one innocent-looking ingredient and that is bitter almonds. Luckily I had not been able to find them in the shops. In America they are illegal as they contain a toxic whiff of cyanide and if ingested they can harm the nervous system and can cause death. A recipe for macaroons calls for half a pound of "mixed almonds" about which no information is online but obviously they would be dangerous to snack on and of uncertain toxicity in cooking especially if one did not choose the proportions of bitter to sweet knowledgeably—this may be the most dangerous recipe in the collection. The traditional Cornish Black Cake (also known as "Penzance Cake") calls for a little quantity of bitter almonds of 28.35 grams (1 oz) plus a bigger quantity of sweet almonds at 85 grams (2 ½ oz). Modern versions online have no almonds at all.

Raw bitter almonds are unpalatable. Researching on the internet, I found that one site said baking reduces their cyanide content by 79% and that their use has not been entirely abandoned, such as in marzipan. Although bitter almonds are now decidedly off my shopping list, I can see that the recipes for macaroons and Penzance Cake were *trusted*. One trusts too that the graveyard scene at the front of the book was happenstance. Never mind, tomorrow, thanks to my son finding a shop with some, we will experience volatile butter, thanks to the small album of recipes.

Sample Recipe



Fenwick, Scotland to Victoria, Australia: The Story of Robert Barr

Carolyn Traynor | Member # 15367

Robert **Barr** Senior was my great-great-grandfather; his son, Robert Barr ‘the younger’, was my great-great uncle. This is their story, as I know it.

Robert Barr the younger was born in 1849 in Fenwick, Kilmarnock, Scotland, to Robert Barr Snr and Ann **Dunlop** Barr. Life changed forever in 1856, not far from their Scottish home, when 52-year-old Robert Snr took his own life by cutting his throat. Young Robert was only seven at the time. He was one of eight children, and his mother, Ann, was left to raise a large family ranging from 25-year-old William Barr down to five-year-old Elizabeth Barr.

Around 1863, the entire Barr family emigrated to Melbourne, Australia, as free settlers. They were part of an extensive network of Fenwick families who made the voyage together (albeit over several years) and settled in the same Victorian towns. By 1870, the Barrs were well-established in Birregurra, Victoria, around 130km south-east of Melbourne, alongside many other Scottish families, including the **Bicket** family.

Historical records and family notices from Trove noted that even decades after arriving in Australia, this particular Scottish community remained culturally tight knit. At family gatherings well into the early 1900s, many still spoke their Lowland Scots language rather than standard English.

In 1874, 25-year-old Robert moved to Tharanbegg, near Tungamah in the Goulburn Valley region of Victoria, as a “first land selector”. Several relatives followed him, including his nephew, Hugh Bicket, a bootmaker. That same year, Robert married 22-year-old Janet **Muir**. They began a family and were reportedly doing financially well, welcoming daughters Annie in 1876 and Janet in 1877.

However, tragedy shadowed the family. Robert Barr had struggled with his mental health for several years and, in a harrowing echo of his father’s death, had previously attempted to take his own life by cutting his throat, as his father had done. In September 1879, at just 30 years old, Robert Barr shot and killed himself at his Victorian property with his family nearby. This tragic pattern would haunt the family for years; one of Robert’s sisters—my great-grandmother—would also later die by suicide.

At the time of Robert’s death, Janet was pregnant. Their son, born in 1880, was named Robert Barr in his father’s honour. Baby Robert grew up, married and passed the name “Robert Barr” down through his own line. In 1881, the widowed Janet Barr married her late husband’s nephew, Hugh Bicket, the bootmaker. Together they had eight more children, bringing Janet Muir Barr Bicket, a total of eleven children.

The family matriarch, Ann Barr, passed away at the Bicket family home in Birregurra in 1895. She is buried in Warncoort Cemetery, where her headstone notes she was the relict of her husband Robert, who had died nearly forty years earlier in Scotland.

In Victoria, for over a century, Robert Barr lay in an unmarked grave—a consequence of the era’s stigma regarding suicide. In the 1990s, his direct descendants came forward to honour him with a proper headstone. There he rests today, in the Burramine Cemetery, Victoria, finally in a marked grave.

Sources

Family records; Victorian BDM; Trove; Ancestry; Birregurra and Tungamah Historical Societies.



Robert BARR m. Janet MUIR

C,A,12, Section B, 319.3.36 Acres, Parish of Thuranbegg

At the Local Land Board, Benalla

Application for Licence Recommended-July 7, 1874

Application to transfer Leasehold to Janet Barr
(Administratrix) - 1880

Application to Transfer Leasehold to Joseph Watson -
1880 1880

After Mr Robert Barr's death from suicide on September 15, 1879, Mrs. Janet Barr remarried Mr Hugh Bicket. Bicket. - On the 19 ~ July, at Nyah West, Janet Muir, widow of the late Hugh Bicket, loved mother of Rob, Annie (Mrs J.T. Morris, Jessie (deceased, Mary, Lizzie (Mrs J. Forrester) Aggie (Mrs. H. Reid), Jean (Mrs. A. Pick). and Roy (deceased). Aged 80 years.. late of Tungamah. - Mother

Source: *The Argus* - July 21, 1933

The Life of Adam Pearson Armstrong

Ewin Armstrong | Member # 8202

Adam Pearson **Armstrong** was born in 1788 near Dalkeith, Midlothian, Scotland, into a family steeped in musical tradition. His wife's grandfather, Niel **Gow**, and father, Nathaniel Gow, were both prominent figures in Scottish traditional music. Armstrong, however, chose a different path—one shaped not by the arts, but by opportunity, migration, and the hardships of colonial life.

In 1810, Adam married Margaret Gow, daughter of Nathaniel Gow. They had six children over the following fifteen years. Armstrong engaged in several business ventures in Scotland, including acquiring a share in the Drum coalfield, but these efforts ultimately failed due to flooding and strong competition from English coal suppliers. Hoping to turn his fortunes around, Armstrong moved the family to England and later to Wales, where he found work as a land agent for William Edward **Powell** of the Nanteos Estate. His role with Powell ended in uncertain circumstances—perhaps due to politics or mismanagement—and by the early 1820s, he was unemployed in London, supporting six children. Then tragedy struck—in 1824, Margaret died at the age of 37.

It was during this period of personal loss and economic struggle that Armstrong met Thomas **Peel**, a colonial promoter organizing a migration to the new Swan River Colony in Western

Australia. Peel promised land and fresh opportunity to those who accompanied him—on the condition that they arrive before a government-imposed deadline. In July 1829, Armstrong and his children sailed from England aboard the *Gilmore*, one of the earliest ships to bring settlers to the colony. The ship arrived late, in December 1829, disqualifying the group from receiving the large land grants that had been promised.

Still determined, Armstrong initially attempted to settle with Peel near present-day Mandurah. The area, however, was plagued by poor soil, swampland, and limited access to food. Conflict with local Noongar people and harsh environmental conditions led to widespread hardship, and many settlers gave up their claims. Armstrong relocated to Fremantle, and later Perth, where colonial support and infrastructure were slowly improving.

In 1831, Armstrong was granted 320 acres of land along the Swan River, where he established a small holding known as Dalkeith Cottage, named after his Scottish hometown. Using limestone from nearby cliffs, he built a modest dwelling and attempted to farm the land. He grew grapes, melons, and other crops, and kept goats, but struggled to maintain wheat crops and livestock at levels sufficient to sustain his family. Despite these challenges, his presence marked the beginnings



Adam Pearson Armstrong

of European settlement in what would later become the prestigious suburb of Dalkeith.

In 1838, Armstrong sold the Dalkeith property and returned to the Murray River, where he had previously held a small farmstead. The area that would become known as Ravenswood offered a more forgiving environment, with fertile riverfront land, access to fresh water, and fewer of the difficulties that plagued the coastal regions.

Armstrong's second chapter in Ravenswood marked the most stable and productive period of his life in the colony. Drawing on his European farming knowledge and his hard-won colonial experience, he developed a working farm and became a respected figure in the community.

His homestead was one of the earliest established in the region and became a focal point for other settlers arriving in the area. It likely served not only as a

The Life of Adam (Cont.)

residence and farm but also as an informal gathering place for the growing population along the Murray River.

In addition to farming, Armstrong is believed to have contributed to the emerging civic and social life of Ravenswood. Though formal records are limited, local oral histories and early accounts suggest that he took an active role in promoting the values essential to stable frontier life—particularly education and religion. He is said to have encouraged the early establishment of churches and schools, laying the foundation for the town's eventual development into a permanent settlement.

These efforts were especially important in a time when the region was still largely wilderness and the success of the colony depended on the initiative and cooperation of individuals willing to invest in the future. Armstrong's experience, maturity, and leadership would have been invaluable during this period of uncertainty. He spent the remaining years of his life in Ravenswood, in relative comfort and stability, passing away on 28 September 1853 at the age of 65. He was buried locally, having witnessed—and helped shape—the transformation of the region from undeveloped bushland into a fledgling rural settlement.

Today, Armstrong's name endures in Western Australia. The suburb of Dalkeith reflects his early influence, and the Adam Armstrong Pavilion in Nedlands stands in recognition of his role in the region's development. His descendants continue to live in the Murray River area and beyond, a living link to the early settler history of the Swan River Colony.

Though his life was marked by hardship, Adam Armstrong's story is one of perseverance and quiet determination. From the coalfields of Scotland to the banks of the Murray River, he embodied the resilience of the early colonists whose efforts formed the basis of modern Western Australian society.

Note: This article draws on a variety of published historical information and publicity available reference material relating to Adam Armstrong and his journey from Scotland to Western Australia.



Ship *Gilmour*

**NZSG's
Shipping Collection**

Did your family swim to New Zealand?
(We know you have family that came to New Zealand!
(Everyone does!))

To answer this question, in 2024, we launched our biggest project to date! Finding information on every voyage to, from and around New Zealand up to and including 1920.

Hundreds of volunteers across New Zealand and Australia have been trawling through newspapers, NZSG records, museums, books, diaries, CDs, microfiche and microfilm to find details.

To date, we have found 220,000 voyages.

Do you have something to contribute to this epic project?
Join us!

shippingcollection@genealogy.org.nz

New Zealand Society of Genealogists
Te Hōkūhau Kaitiaki o Aotearoa
Family history - Researcher and for the future



Celebrating the Strength of FHWA's Special Interest Groups

Ian Dew — Liaison Officer | Member # 9410

FamilyHistoryWA is powered by people—volunteers who give their time, energy, and expertise to help others discover their stories. Nowhere is that spirit more visible than in our wide and vibrant network of Special Interest Groups, House Groups, and user groups.

Together, they form one of the most diverse and engaged genealogical communities in Western Australia.

FHWA currently supports:

Eight geographic research groups, covering Australia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Europe, India, and SouthEast Asia.

These groups offer deep regional knowledge and practical guidance that can turn research challenges into breakthroughs.

Six general interest groups, providing welcoming spaces to develop skills, share experiences, and explore specialised themes within genealogy.

A couple of user groups, helping members get the most out of popular genealogy programs and digital tools.

Five House Groups, meeting across the metropolitan area and offering friendly, local gatherings where members can learn together in a relaxed setting.

Across all these groups, one thing remains constant: **every session, workshop, and discussion is made possible by volunteers.** Convenors, presenters, coordinators, and behind the scenes helpers work tirelessly to create programs that are interesting, practical, and supportive.

Their commitment ensures that FHWA remains a place where members can learn, collaborate, and feel part of a community.

Rather than highlight any single group, it's important to acknowledge that **they all do a terrific job.** Each contributes something unique to the society's strength and character. If you haven't explored what they offer, now is the perfect time. Visit the FHWA website to see upcoming meetings, topics, and opportunities to get involved — you may find a group that's exactly what you've been looking for.

FHWA's Special Interest Groups reflect the generosity of our volunteers and the shared belief that family history is richer when we learn together.



The Military Interest Group and the Western Australia Interest Group had a three-day trip to Albany where the private museum 'Recollections of War' was a highlight.

Exploring Our Ghost Towns Competition – the last two Answers

Ian Barnes | Member # 9003

Volume 16 #1 March 2025



The photo shows the **ruins of the Lock-up at the Lynton Hiring Depot** which was established in 1853 near Port Gregory to supply convict labour for the Geraldine Lead Mine and nearby pastoral stations, following mineral discoveries in the late 1840s. The depot struggled with isolation, high costs, poor soil, and unhealthy water, leading to sickness and inefficiency. It was closed in 1857, after which the buildings fell into disrepair.

Volume 16 #3-4 Nov 25
March 2026

The photo is of the **Greenhills Bakery** (2 Boyles Road). Greenhills is about 22 km from York. It began as a private town site and grew after the railway arrived in 1898, Greenhills became the railhead until 1908, with the Railway Hotel, station, houses, bank, and other buildings developing around the siding.

The nearby Tavern (the old Hotel) is noted for its meals.

The background image was taken from *The Western Mail* Sunday 25 December 1910 page 32. “The wheat harvest – a busy day at Dangin on the Greenhills-Quairading railway”

Frances Schifferli’s answer got to the *WesternAncestor* mailbox on the 23 June 2026, and so did Adele Cameron’s – they are jointly commended!



Ten Years Of The Military Interest Group

FamilyHistoryWA

Angela Heymans | Member #13105 -Convenor Military Interest Group

Just over ten years ago a meeting was held at FamilyHistoryWA's Unit 4 to test the interest in establishing a Military Interest Group at FHWA (then Western Australian Genealogical Society). With the nation celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli Landing on 25 April 1915, there had been an increase in enquiries from members wanting to research their military ancestors.

The response was overwhelming agreement. An interim convenor and committee were appointed and immediately got to work—organising meetings and speakers creating a Facebook page, drafting a brochure and surveying members for their research interests. The scope of what the group would cover were broad:

...any military service worldwide, including but not limited to militia, army, air force and navy, any country, battle, era, and type of military experience including peacekeeping and resistance.

Since our inception, our focus has been to support members with their military research by identifying resources, facilitating talks by specialists, holding workshops and arranging excursions. We have been fortunate to be able to attract a range of external speakers on a variety of military topics including:

- Gerard Foley, 'The Wills of Soldiers who died in WW1

in the State Records Office of WA'

- Katie Benfield and Carol Littlefair, '2018 York Residence Museum ANZAC Exhibition'
- Dr Mike Galvin, 'Lt Victor Ketterer, 16th Battalion'
- James Hurst, 'The Landing in the Dawn'
- Trish Woodman, 'The Boer War, What's that?'
- Rob Endersbee, 'Merredin's Military History'

In addition, FHWA members have generously shared their knowledge and expertise to help others. Of special mention are the contributions by Diane Oldman and Gwyn Williams. Diane's expertise in 19th century British military topics and resources is highly valued, while Gwyn's talks are always full of practical information and advice. And who can forget her entertaining talk on the 'Great Emu War of 1932' (which the Emus won!).

COVID provided challenges as it did for all interest groups with the closure of our premises at May St to meetings. But we quickly learned the intricacies of Google Meet and held online meetings to keep members engaged and informed. Since our return to face-to-face meetings, we have continued to offer members the ability to attend online.

In addition to meetings and talks, we have arranged excursions to a number of places of interest including the Army Museum of Western Australia, and Rottnest Island to view its WW2 history. A three-day trip to Albany in partnership with the Western Australia Interest Group was memorable: the Field of Lights, and the private museum 'Recollections of War' were among the highlights.

A 2016 visit to the Army Museum instigated a significant project which has evolved to become the Western Australian Military Digital Library or WAMDL. We have been working with the Army Museum to digitise the enormous treasure of personal documents in its archive and make them publicly available. Initially managed by the Military Interest Group, this is now an independent, incorporated not for profit charity. But this could not have begun or grown without the support of FamilyHistoryWA or its members.

Since the first meeting in 2015, it has been my honour to be the convenor of this group. Thanks go to everyone who has served on the committee over the ten years, to the current committee of Gwyn Williams, Susan Salvair and Kay Reynolds, and to FHWA members who continue to support us. Looking forward to the next ten years!



Need help with Family Tree Maker?

GUM members have free access to two FTM Zoom User Groups every month

AND

a monthly newsletter which provides beginner and advanced articles on using FTM

Want to know more?

visit www.vicgum.asn.au



An Association of Family History Researchers Using Computers

Established 1984

August is National Family History Month

FHWA has an exciting and busy program of events during August.

Grow Your Family Tree

State Library of WA

12 and 13 August 2026 (9:30am-3pm)

Family History Open Day

FHWA Research Centre

Sunday 30 August 2026 (10am-3pm)

Plus many more events
at a variety of venues

More information and bookings at
fhwa.org.au/events

Enquiries: nfhm@fhwa.org.au
Liana 0414 412 035 | Ruth 0439 960 606

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS AMBULANCE SERVICE WWII

Seeking information to document a history of ambulance service by the Australian Red Cross in Perth during World War II.



The majority of drivers were women, who formed a strong brigade and worked tirelessly in their spare time.

Can You Help?

If you have an ancestor who was part of the brigade, please share information or photos with:

Margaret Little | Albany WA | Member 13596

marglittle@gmail.com

DIGITISE

Your Paper Records

FHWA is happy to offer this service to members. Given the substantial amount of volunteer time involved we need to charge a reasonable fee.

Each project is likely to vary depending on the number of photos, clipping and variability of page sizes.

As a rough guide we will charge 50 cents per scanned page.

FHWA MEMBERSHIP FEES PER ANNUM

Joining Fee (once only)	\$15
Single Membership (12 months)	\$90
Joint Membership (12 months)*	\$135
Internet Membership (those living outside WA)	\$60
Student Membership (full time)	\$45
Affiliate and Institutional Members	\$110
Journal Only Members (includes postage)	\$50
* Two people at one address receiving one journal.	

THE JOURNAL OF FHWA: *WesternAncestor*

Published three times a year, in March, July, & November. Print run, approx 1500 copies per issue. Also available to members as an e-journal.

Contributions

Please email to westernancestor@fhwa.org.au, or post to The Editor, 6/48 May St, Bayswater 6053.

Preferred in MS Word, or similar format, as an email attachment. Send images separately, not embedded in the document. For more details, see Contributions and Copyright under 'Journal' at www.fhwa.org.au

Closing Dates for Contributions

March issue: 20 January

July issue: 20 May

November issue: 20 September

Advertising Rates (Full Colour)

One eighth page \$50; Quarter page \$100; Half page \$200; Full page \$400.

There is a 10% discount given if booking advertising space in two or more editions. There is also a 20% discount for members.

For details about advertising, please contact the Editor at westernancestor@fhwa.org.au

FHWA RESEARCH SERVICES

The FamilyHistoryWA research team will carry out limited research for non-members at \$40 per hour or \$25 per hour for members living outside the Perth metropolitan area.

A non-refundable deposit of \$20 must accompany all enquiries. Members living more than 500 km from Perth can access two hours free research per year.

Contact Ian Barnes at research@fhwa.org.au

FHWA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee now meet, on-line, on the FOURTH Tuesday of each month at 4pm. Members are welcome to submit suggestions or questions, in writing, for the Committee's consideration. These need to be emailed to the Secretary (secretary@fhwa.org.au) at least ten days prior to the meeting.

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

Albany Regional FHS Inc

Albany Public Library, York Street, Albany, WA, 6330
www.albanyfamilyhistory.org.au
albanyfamilyhistory@gmail.com

Australind FHS Inc

Australind Library Complex, Mulgara St, Australind, WA, 6233
Tel: 9796 1050
www.australindfhs.org | alindfhs@inet.net.au

Busselton FHS Inc

First floor, City of Busselton Community Resource Centre, 21 Cammilleri Street, Busselton, WA, 6280
Tel: 9752 3979
busseltonfhs.com.au
secretary@busseltonfhs.com.au

Collie FHS Inc

Miners Institute Building, Throssell Street, Collie, WA, 6225
c.f.h.s@westnet.com.au

Esperance FHS Inc

Esperance Museum, cnr James & Dempster Strs, Esperance, WA, 6450
efhs@westnet.com.au

Geraldton FHS Inc

The Geraldton Cultural Trust, 321 Marine Terrace, Geraldton, WA, 6530
geraldtonfhs.wordpress.com/
gfhsecretary@gmail.com

Mandurah FHS Inc

Corner of Third Avenue and Jack Ireland Park Road, Mandurah, WA, 6210
Tel: 9586 9760
mfhs.org.au/ | mfhs@westnet.com.au

Swan River Pioneers 1829-1838 Inc

C/- 8 Reid Street, Bassendean WA 6054
Tel: 9296 9520
www.swanriverpioneers.com
info@swanriverpioneers.com

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Albany History Collection

221 York St, Albany, WA, 6330
library.albany.wa.gov.au/programs-collections/albany-history-collection/albany-history-collection.aspx

Army Museum of WA Foundation

Artillery Barracks, 2 Burt Street, Fremantle, WA, 6160
armymuseumwa.com.au

Bassendean Local Studies Collection

46, Old Perth Rd, Bassendean, WA, 6054
library.bassendean.wa.gov.au/local-studies.aspx

Birtwistle Local Studies Library

Armada Shopping Centre, Shop 64/10 Orchard Ave, Armadale, WA, 6112
library.armadale.wa.gov.au/birtwistle-library

Broome Public Library

PO Box 44, Broome, WA, 6725
<https://www.broome.wa.gov.au/Community/Broome-Public-Library>

Bunbury Museum and Heritage Centre

1 Arthur St, Bunbury, WA, 6230
bunburymuseum.com.au

City of Belmont Museum

213 Wright Street, Cloverdale, WA, 6105
www.belmont.wa.gov.au/discover/places-to-go/ruth-faulkner-library-and-belmont-museum

Claremont Community Hub

327 Stirling Hwy, Claremont, WA, 6010
www.claremont.wa.gov.au/places/community-hub-and-library/

Fremantle Local History Collection

Walyalup Civic Centre, 151 High St, Fremantle, WA, 6160
www.fremantle.wa.gov.au/fremantle-history-centre

Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of WA

61 Woodrow Ave, Yokine, WA, 6062
<https://jhgsa.org.au/>

Joondalup Local History Collection

102 Boas Ave, Joondalup, WA, 6027
www.joondalup.wa.gov.au/category/community-and-libraries

City of Kalgoorlie Boulder Local History Archives

Boulder Town Hall, 116 Burt St, Boulder, WA, 6432
mailbag@ckb.wa.gov.au

Karrinyup Library

Davenport St, Karrinyup, WA, 6018
www.stirling.wa.gov.au/leisure-and-culture/libraries-and-hubs

Nedlands Local Studies Library

60 Stirling Hwy, Nedlands, WA, 6009
www.nedlands.wa.gov.au/community/libraries/local-history.aspx

Relationships Australia

Level 2, 156 Railway Pde, West Leederville, WA, 6007
www.relationshipswa.org.au/services

Tuart Place

24 High St, Fremantle, WA 6160
www.tuartplace.org

Victoria Park Library

27 Sussex St, East Victoria Park, WA 6101
www.victoriapark.wa.gov.au/Around-town/Facilities/Library

Vincent Local History Centre

99 Loftus St, Leederville, WA, 6007
library.vincent.wa.gov.au/local-history-centre.aspx

Wanneroo Regional Museum

3 Rocca Way, Wanneroo, WA 6065
www.wanneroo.wa.gov.au/wannerooregionalmuseum

Yorgum Link Up

176 Wittenoom, East Perth, WA, 6004
<https://yorgum.org.au/services/link-up/>

York Research & Archival Centre

Sandalwood Yards, Cnr Avon Tce & Ford St, York, WA, 6302
www.theyorksociety.com

HOUSE GROUPS

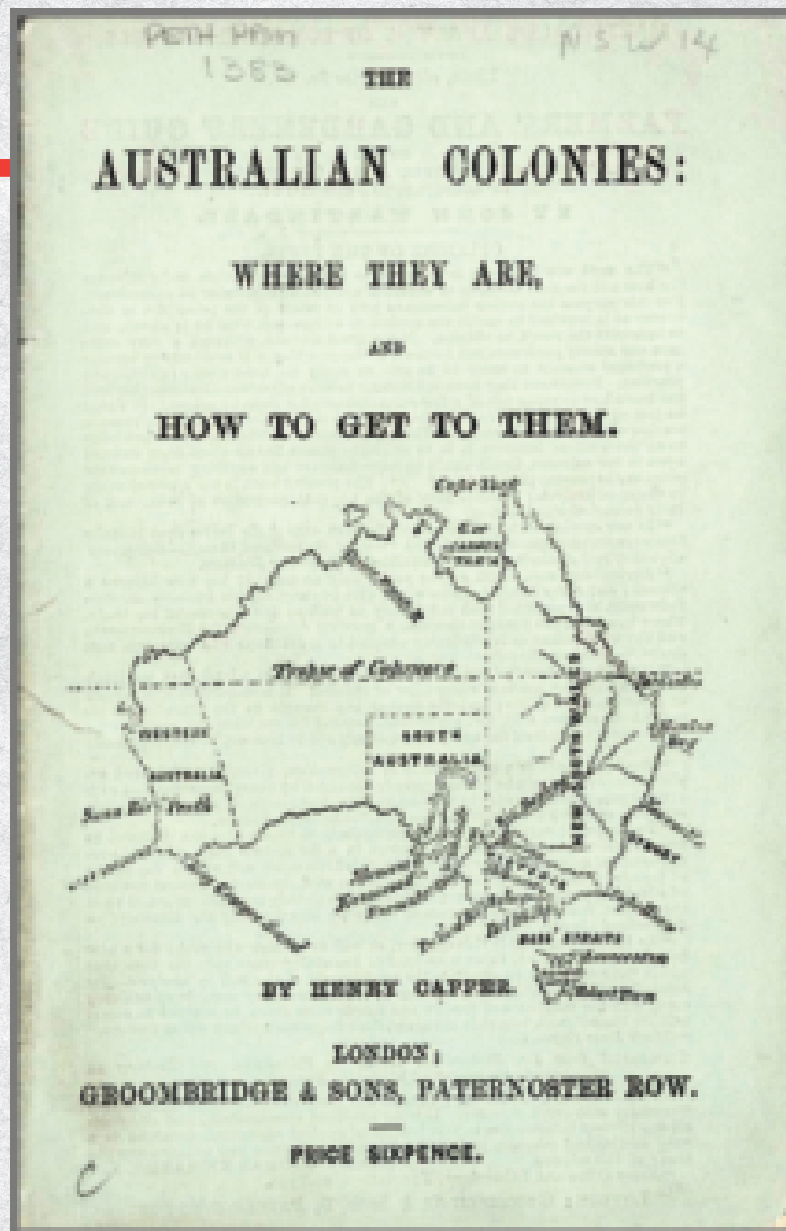
Eastern Hills
easternhills.hg@fhwa.org.au | Edwina Shooter

Kalamunda Area
kalamunda.hg@fhwa.org.au | Heather Simon

Kelmscott
(08) 9495 4963 | Colleen Fancote

Northern Suburbs
northsuburbs.hg@fhwa.org.au | Wendy Bloomfield

South of the River
sor.hg@fhwa.org.au | Louise Clarkson



Cover illustrations

Front Cover: James Fagan, National Library of Australia, PIC Drawer 3957 #U2589 NK1242; The emigrant's farewell, the Lord be with you. London : Published by Ackermann & Co., Feby. 24th, 1853, 1 print : col. lithograph ; 35 x 52.7 cm. Permission granted to use this out-of-copyright image.

Back Cover: The Australian colonies : where they are and how to get to them / by Henry Capper; London : Groombridge and Sons, 1855 (front cover of book).